



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

JESSE WHITE • Secretary of State

November 9, 2022

Dear Editor:

On Veterans Day, I encourage all Illinoisans to take a moment to honor and thank our veterans who bravely served our country.

Originally known as Armistice Day to commemorate and celebrate the end of World War I, Congress expanded the federal holiday in 1954 — renaming it Veterans Day — to recognize all U.S. veterans who served honorably in the military during wartime or peacetime.

I had the privilege of serving as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division and as a member of the Illinois National Guard and Reserve. This experience helped shape me into the person I am today. I remain grateful to those with whom I served, and to those who served before and after me.

As I near the end of my 24th and final year as Illinois Secretary of State, I am deeply thankful to our state's veterans, and I am proud to have initiated efforts to help veterans and to honor them for their service to our nation.

In 2017, I initiated a law that makes it easier for military veterans to get jobs in the trucking industry. Public Act 100-0223 allows for an exemption from the Commercial Driver License (CDL) test requirement for qualified current or former military personnel who participated in military heavy-vehicle driving programs. Illinois was the first state in the nation to take advantage of changes to federal CDL regulations that grant state driver licensing agencies the authority to exempt veterans from the written and road skills testing, a move known as the "Even Exchange" process.

We have also implemented the policy that gives U.S. military veterans the opportunity to obtain an updated driver's license or ID card with the word "VETERAN" displayed under the signature on the front of the card. This applies to veterans who have received an *Honorable* or *General under Honorable Conditions* discharge. The veteran's designation helps ensure military veterans living in Illinois receive the services and benefits for which they are entitled, including healthcare, education and employment assistance.

Lastly, I am proud to have instituted a policy that allows veterans to receive expedited service while visiting a Driver Services facility — meaning they move to the front of the line.

Please take time Friday, Nov. 11, to thank veterans for their service and commitment to our great country.

Sincerely,

Jesse White
Illinois Secretary of State